

The Ishbane Conspiracy

Abortion

Ice Breaker/Game:

Book Study:

Rock-a-Bye Baby

Time: about 60-90 minutes

Students will learn about the themes of “The Ishbane Conspiracy” by Randy Alcorn, more specifically determining their own views on abortion and learn that decisions that affect their families are important to God.

Supplies: Bibles, *The Ishbane Conspiracy* by Randy Alcorn, masking tape, whiteboard, markers, index cards, pencils, a paper bag, “Questions List” handout, paper.

Start the study out in gender specific groups and discuss the students’ reactions and insights of chapters 30-34. Allow time for discussions and questions. **(15min)**

Ask: **What stood out to you, this week, in your reading?**

Do you have any questions about what we have covered so far, or about the story?

What did you think of this week’s ‘light’ topic?

Say: **This week we are going to discuss a difficult subject, one that has a lot of strong opinions out there and may not be easy to talk about: abortion.**

Before the Study

For the “Anonymous Debate” activity, write each of the five opinion headings from the “Questions List” handout across the top of a separate sheet of paper. Then use masking tape to divide your meeting room into five equal pie-shaped sections. Tape one of the prepared sheets of newsprint to the wall of each section. Also make enough photocopies of the “Questions List” handout for every student to have one

Be aware that students in your group may have had abortions or may have encouraged girlfriends to have abortions. This topic will be especially difficult for these young people. If you notice that a student is uncharacteristically quiet or more extroverted than usual, gently

approach that person, talk about how he or she feels, and be prepared to refer the student to someone, such as a counselor or pastor, who can help the student process his or her feelings.

Anonymous Debate

(30min)

(Illustration based on Innovative Tools by Group Publishing)

Say: **Today we're going to discuss various views about abortion and explore abortion's effects on people's lives. As we discuss the issues surrounding abortion, we need to remember one very important thing: We need to act and speak respectfully toward each other. To help us do this, we're going to conduct a very different kind of debate.**

Before beginning the debate, pray, asking God to teach His views on abortion and families. Also, encourage students to ask God to help them discuss this emotional subject in a spirit of love.

Hand each student an index card and a pencil. Have students write their opinions about abortion on their cards, then place them in a paper bag. Pass the bag around the room, and have each student draw out a card. For the remainder of the debate, everyone must discuss the abortion issue from the perspective written on his or her card.

Say: **Read the opinions about abortion posted on the walls, and then decide which opinion is most similar to the opinion on your card. When you've made a decision, stand in the appropriate section of the room as marked by the tape on the floor.**

(When your students first choose an opinion area, they may all end up in the same area. If this happens, begin the discussion with the class as it is, or invite students to spread themselves among the other opinion areas for a more diverse debate.)

After everyone has chosen an area to stand in, distribute copies of the "Questions List" handout, and have students in each area discuss the questions under their section's opinion heading.

Give the groups 15 minutes to discuss the questions on the hand out.

Say: **Now that you have had the chance to discuss these different views, you are welcome to move to a different area if you don't agree with your area's opinion.**

Spend another 15 minutes discussing the new opinion and why they chose that opinion to support. Then come back together as a big group.

Break into 4 groups with people mixed from each of the 5 original areas. **(20min)**

Ask: **How did these questions involve other members of the pregnant person's family?**

How well does the opinion you stood by consider others in the mother's family? In the father's family? In both parents' future families?

Does the opinion you stood by seem to consider that your family is important to God? Explain.

Do you think the Bible has anything to say about your life, before you were born?

Read *Jeremiah 1:4-5* and *Psalms 139:13-16*. Have them read and summarize what these verses have to do with life before birth.

4 The Lord gave me this message: 5 "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations."

¹³You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. ¹⁵You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. ¹⁶You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

Ask: **Do you think these verses only apply to King David and Jeremiah?**

Say: **Thankfully they apply to all of us! Before we were born God new us and loved us!**

Ask: **How can you use these verses to help you form your opinion on abortion?**

Come back together as a big group. **(10min)**

Say: **Even if you believe that abortion is wrong, you may meet someone who has gone through one.**

Ask: **How do you think you should treat them?**

What do you think they are going through because of the abortion?

Say: **Here is a verse from Ephesians. It's not directly talking about abortion but it does give us guidelines for how to treat people, even if they have sinned.**

Have a student read *Ephesians 4:32*

³²Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

Say: There will be times when someone who has had an abortion, possibly one of your friends, will feel guilty. Remember Jillian's mom's reaction and testimony. Even years after she had an abortion, she still had feelings of shame and regret. As Christians, we are to be Christ to those that need it most. Nobody is perfect and everyone needs Jesus. Let's pray that God would give us His love and wisdom to help anyone who is considering or has gone through an abortion.

End in prayer.